



Snow

1. As a returning exile, Ka's nostalgia for the homeland puts him in an optimistic state of mind. Does he remain in this mood throughout his stay in Kars? Was his involvement in the affairs of Kars a miscalculation on his part?
2. Kars is described in the book as a place at the crossroads of "two empires now defunct," which has seen "endless wars, rebellions, massacres, and atrocity." Despite the forced westernization of Turkey by Kemal Ataturk and the military, Kars experiences intense poverty and hopelessness. How has this history shaped the hopes and dreams of the town's inhabitants?
3. Ka's conversations with a variety of characters—Muhtar, Blue, the boys from the religious school, Sheikh Efendi, and Kadife—explore the gap between traditional Islam and Western secularism. How do these conversations affect Ka's identity as an intellectual and the possibility of his own belief in God? Why is the realization of his spirituality so unsettling for him?
4. Throughout the novel, several explanations are given for the disturbing phenomenon of the suicide girls. Does the novel provide an answer to the mystery of why women are killing themselves in Kars?
5. What is the significance of Ipek's love for Blue and Ka? Which does she ultimately love? Was Ka foolish to believe that love would bring him happiness?
6. Pamuk does a good job communicating the views of the Islamists versus the secularists and nationalists. Do you find your sympathies changing in regards to each group? Do any events in the story make you want to pick sides? Which side is Ka on?